



News

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NEWS RELEASE

Contact

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Child Welfare Update

Children in Utah's child welfare system are safer and healthier than they were in 1999 when a court-imposed settlement agreement was reached.

Qualitative case reviews are done several times a year by a combined team selected by Court Monitor, Paul Vincent and the Office of Services Review. The court monitor trains and certifies all reviewers.

The reviews indicated children were safe in their daily living. Children were healthy and had their physical needs met. This shows improvement over previous years as the Division of Child and Family Services moves forward to meet the plan's rigorous standards.

Still the National Center for Youth Law filed a motion in federal court because the state reduced funding for the court monitor's contract. DCFS has restored the monitoring budget until the case is decided in court.

"System performance has improved," DCFS Director Richard Anderson said Monday. "We have documentation that shows children are safer and families are more stable than they were in 1999".

"In some cases we haven't been able to achieve the plan's stringent requirements," Anderson said. "We didn't always have adequate resources. This is a large-scale change involving many allied systems. Our performance continues to improve and compares favorably with other states' performance."

"The reality people must face is that the entire nation has gone through the crisis of a severe economic downturn. Agencies across the country face severe budget cuts," Anderson said. "It would be hard to find anyone that hasn't been touched by that. Even so, our services are improving and our system for caring for children is fundamentally sound."

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